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Claim 5 has been canceled. Claims 1-4 and 6-14 remain pending in the application. Applicants amend claims 1, 9-11, and 13 for clarification, and refer to Fig. 11 and its corresponding description in the specification for an exemplary embodiment of and support for the claimed invention. No new matter has been added.

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Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner indicate acceptance of the drawings.

Claims 1-4, 6, 8-11 and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,611,537 to Eden et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,396,816 to Astle et al.; claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eden et al. in view of Astle et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,742,594 to Natarajan; and claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eden et al. in view of Astle et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,665,518 to Champlin et al. Applicants amend the claims in a good faith effort to clarify the invention as distinguished from the cited references, and respectfully traverse the rejections.

The Examiner acknowledged that Eden et al. do not disclose the claimed bandwidth allocation features, and relied upon Astle et al. as a combining reference that allegedly discloses these features. And as acknowledged by the Examiner, Astle et al. only describe allocating requested bandwidth when there is sufficient bandwidth for allocation, and allocating "a minimum amount of bandwidth" of a particular priority level when there is insufficient bandwidth for that particular priority level. As such, Astle et al. do not disclose the claimed feature of a second bandwidth being obtained by dividing a first bandwidth by an integer and being allocated to another part of logical channels. Furthermore, Astle et al. only describe general bandwidth allocation according to bandwidth thresholds, and do not disclose the claimed

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features with respect to allocating bandwidth multiples according to a threshold number of picture data.

Thus, even assuming, arguendo, that it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to combine Astle et al. and Eden et al., the combination would still have failed to disclose or suggest,

“[a] picture distribution system for distributing picture data from a distribution device to a plurality of receiving devices, comprising:

a network where a plurality of logical channels are established in a time division multiplex method;

a distribution device distributing picture data via a logical channel designated by a distribution instruction;

a plurality of receiving devices receiving picture data from respective logical channels designated by receiving instructions; and

an allocation unit for allocating respective bandwidth to each of a plurality of logical channels used to transmit picture data according to a number of picture data to be transmitted, wherein

said allocation unit allocates a predetermined first bandwidth to each of the logical channels when the number of picture data to be transmitted does not exceed a predetermined threshold number, and when the number of picture data to be transmitted exceeds the threshold number said allocation unit allocates the first bandwidth to each of a part of the logical channels and a predetermined second bandwidth, which is obtained by dividing the first bandwidth by a predetermined integer, to each of another part of the logical channels,” as recited in claim 1.  
(Emphasis added)

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, together with claims 2-4, 6, and 8 dependent therefrom, is patentable over Eden et al. and Astle et al., separately and in combination, for at least the foregoing reasons. Claims 9-11 and 13 incorporate features that correspond to those of claim 1 cited above, and are, therefore, together with claim 14 dependent from claim 13, patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons. The Examiner relied upon Natarajan and Champlin et al. to specifically address the additional features recited

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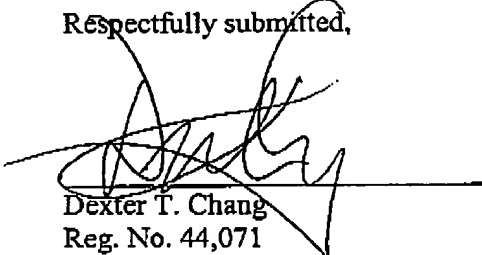
in claims 7 and 12, respectively. As such, the addition of these references would still have failed to cure the above-described deficiencies of Eden et al. and Astle et al., even assuming, arguendo, that such additions would have been obvious to one skilled in the art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 7 and 12 are patentable over the cited references for at least the foregoing reasons.

The above statements on the disclosures in the cited references represent the present opinions of the undersigned attorney. The Examiner is respectfully requested to specifically indicate those portions of the respective reference that provide the basis for a view contrary to any of the above-stated opinions.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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